

4. Communist Societies of Friendship and Cultural Relations ← *all pages*

This ~~Section~~ ^{paper} lists in ~~sub~~-Section A, the Soviet, Chinese, East European satellite, North Korean and North Vietnamese organizations which support and guide Communist friendship and cultural relations groups throughout the world. These friendship/cultural groups are widely exploited by the sponsoring Soviet, Chinese, etc., organizations as propaganda outlets in the free world. Within the Communist bloc countries, the Soviet Union appears to be the only nation which maintains societies of friendship in the other Communist countries. The satellite countries do not, as of this date, have programs whereby they sponsor societies of friendship within each other's territories. Some mention has been made of the possibility of founding a society of friendship with China in the Soviet Union, but there is no evidence as yet that it has been established.

In ~~sub~~-Section B are listed all those societies of friendship or cultural relations promoted by the Soviet, Chinese, East European satellite, North Korean and North Vietnamese sponsoring organizations listed in ~~sub~~-Section A. The identity of the sponsoring Communist country is shown in the title of each friendship/cultural relations society or is otherwise indicated.

It might be noted here that membership in such organizations does not always indicate Communist Party membership or even sympathy with Communism. In some cases in non-Orbit countries, the societies reportedly have listed as their honorary officers, high-ranking government officials or other prominent citizens without having requested permission to do so. In other non-Orbit areas, prominent government officials have permitted their names to be listed as honorary officers of the friendship societies. In many cases this was ~~never~~ not done for reasons of Communist sympathy, but for reasons of protocol because of the quasi-official nature of the friendship society.

There are also incidents where individuals who are students of Russian

literature, history, art, etc., who likewise have no interest in the political purposes of the friendship/cultural relations societies, join one of these groups in order to be able to use its library which is sometimes better supplied with ^a Russian publications than any other local institution.

In ~~sub~~ Section C are listed a group of miscellaneous Communist-sponsored friendship societies which arose for a variety of political reasons. In late 1953 and early 1954, for example, when it became clear that Carlos CASTILLO Armas forces were organizing and would attempt a revolution against the pro-Communist ARBENZ regime in Guatemala, a crop of societies of friendship with Guatemala sprang up in several Latin American countries. Probably the majority of these groups are now inactive. A central directive may have been responsible for the almost simultaneous appearance of these groups, although they appeared to be set up and managed by the local Communist Party.

Sub-Section A

A. COORDINATING BODIES:

Listed below are the Soviet, Chinese, East European satellite, North Korean and North Vietnamese organizations which sponsor, support, guide and exploit as propaganda centers the Communist-dominated friendship and cultural relations societies found throughout the free world.

1. All-Union Society for Cultural Relations Abroad (Soviet)
(Vsesoyuznoye obshchestvo kulturnoy svyazi zagranitsey, VOKS)
and

Office locations: Moscow, Leningrad, USSR

Editorial Office: Ulitsa Kalinina, 16, Moscow, K-9, USSR

Official Publications: The VOKS Bulletin, a bi-monthly, published in several languages.

Moscow News, a bi-weekly, published in French and English.

Numerous news letters and a great number of books on all aspects of Soviet life.

Executive Officers:

Chairman of the Board: Andrey I. DENISOV

First Deputy Chairman: V. J. YAKOVLEV

Subsidiary Organizations: Within the Soviet Union, each

federal republic has its own organization for cultural relations (OKS), ~~with~~ each forming a part of the larger VOKS. Each OKS apparently follows a program which reflects local interests and specific foreign affinities. The Ukrainian OKS, for instance, is especially interested in Canada where there is a large Ukrainian emigre group. Wherever it has been ~~as~~ available, ~~if~~ information about the several OKS organizations ~~has~~ has been listed under the Soviet Union country division of sub-Section B.

Abroad, both the local Communist Party as well as the local VOKS representative appear to provide direction and assistance to the society of friendship with the Soviet Union, even though an attempt is usually made for the friendship societies to appear completely separate from the Communist Party. Since, however, the societies of friendship with the Soviet Union receive much (probably most) of their material support from VOKS and since they serve as VOKS' ~~principal~~ primary propaganda outlets abroad, they are listed as closely related organizations.

2.
b. The Association for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (ACRFC)
Headquarters address: Peiping, China
This organization, formed in May 1954, appears to be the Chinese counterpart of the Soviet VOKS.

Executive Officers:

Chairman:	CH'U T'u-nan
Vice Chairman:	TING Hsi-lin YANG Han-sheng CHAO I-min
Secretary General:	CH'EN Chung-ching
Deputy Secretary General:	WU Hua-chih

The ACRFC is probably subordinate to the United Front Department and to the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Through the ACRFC the Chinese Communist Party maintains an active relationship with societies of friendship with China which are located in several countries of the free world.

The ACRFC should not be confused with the Liaison Bureau for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, a Chinese government organ under the State Council, which deals directly, on a government to government basis, with counterpart organs of the Soviet bloc countries in handling exchanges of cultural delegations between those countries and Communist China.

- 3/c. Albanian Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries
This is possibly the Albanian counterpart of the Soviet VOKS. If so, it presumably supports societies of friendship with Albania which are located in non-Orbit countries.

- 1/d. Committee for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries
(Komitet za priyatelstvo i kulturni vruzki s chuzhbina)

Address: Boulevard Ruski 5, Sofia, Bulgaria

Probably the Bulgarian equivalent of the Soviet VOKS.

Executive Officers:

Chairman: Rada TODOROVA

Vice Chairman (or Secretary): Chudomir PETROV

(In the case of Czechoslovakia, it appears that responsibility for friendship and cultural relations with abroad is divided between the Ministry of Culture and the Czech Foreign Institute, with the latter concentrating particularly on Czechs residing in foreign countries.)

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The Society for Cultural Relations Abroad
(Gesellschaft fuer Kulturelle Verbindungen mit dem Ausland)

(This appears to be the East German counterpart of the Soviet VOKS.)

Executive Officers:

Director: Dr. WIESE (first name unknown)

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f.

Institute for Cultural Relations (Hungarian)
(Kulturkapcsolatok Intezet)

Probably the ~~MA~~ Hungarian equivalent of the Soviet VOKS.

Administratively this organization is under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its four principal functions are/ to:

1. popularize Hungarian culture in foreign lands
2. popularize foreign culture in Hungary
3. assist in the implementation of cultural agreements
4. foster scientific and artistic relations

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f.

Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries

Possibly the North Korean counterpart of the Soviet VOKS.

Executive Officers:

Vice Chairman: YUN SONG-POK

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The Department of Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries

This is possibly the North Vietnamese counterpart of VOKS.

Executive Officers:

Department Head: Nguyen Duc Quy

Deputy Dept. Head: Vu Quoc Uy

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Committee for Foreign Cultural Cooperation (KWKZ)
(Komitet Wspolpracy Kulturalnej z Zagranica)

Polish counterpart of the Soviet VOKS

Executive Officers: Adam RAPACKI

Secretary General: Jan Karol WENDE

Assistant Secretary General: Wojciech CHAS

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Rumanian Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations
(Institutul Romin pentru Relatiile Culturale cu Strainatatea)

Possibly the Rumanian counterpart of the Soviet VOKS.

Executive Officers:

Honorary President: M. ~~Ma~~ MACAVEI

President: Professor Mihail RALEA

Vice President: Iosif BOGDAN

Director: Alexandra ROSIANU

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Commission for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries

Address: Bircaninova #6, Belgrade

Probably the Yugoslav counterpart of the Soviet VOKS.

Officers:

President: Marko RISTIC

Secretary: Ivo FROL